

## REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are currently pending in this application.

### Non-Statutory Subject Matter

Claims 1-18 were rejected as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claims 1, 4 and 11 have been amended herein to overcome this rejection, and claims 2-3, 5-10 and 12-18 depend from the amended claims.

### Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-8, 11-15 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Satasushi et al. (Japanese Publication No. 11-126155).

Satasushi discloses a data rearranging device which inputs plural data. The device includes data selector circuits or comparison circuits and an inverter (paragraph 0006).

Satasuchi does not teach or suggest the invention as set forth in amended claims 1, 4, and 11 which includes sort processing including a combination of comparison processing by data comparators and selection processing by data selectors, not data selector circuits or comparison circuits and an inverter as in Satasushi. Further, in such sort processing as claimed herein, the number of basic block basic cells in a first stage is greater than the number of basic block basic cells in a second stage, and the number of basic processes is equal to the number of combinations of compared input data pieces.

Therefore, in contrast to the claimed invention herein, in Satasusha the data rearrangement circuits include data selector circuits or comparison circuits and an inverter, and there is no disclosure of the number of basic cells in a first stage being greater than the number of basic cells in a second stage, and the number of basic processes being equal to the number of combinations of compared input data pieces.

### Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 9-10 and 16-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Satasushi in view of Lewis et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,775,667). Since these claims depend directly or indirectly from the amended independent claims, it is submitted that they are patentable in view of the patentability of the amended independent claims as set forth above.

### Dependent Claims

In view of the patentability of the underlying amended independent claims over the cited references as set forth above, it is submitted that the claims depending therefrom are likewise patentable.

### CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance, and requests that it be passed to issue. If there are any issues which can be discussed in a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact applicant's attorney at (310) 242-2732.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required fee relating to this response to our Deposit Account No. 06-2425.

Respectfully submitted,

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